

Washington deals blow to plan for coal export terminal

By RACHEL LA CORTE
Associated Press



AP Photo/Elaine Thompson, File

This 2005 file photo shows the port of Longview on the Columbia River at Longview, Wash. The Department of Ecology said Tuesday it rejected a water quality permit that Millennium Bulk Terminals wanted because the proposed facility near Longview would have caused "significant and unavoidable harm" to the environment.

OLYMPIA, Wash. — A company that wants to build and operate a large terminal to export coal from the western U.S. to Asia was denied a key permit by Washington state on Tuesday because of environmental concerns.

The Department of Ecology rejected a water quality permit that Millennium Bulk Terminals sought because the proposed facility near the city of Longview would have caused "significant and unavoidable harm" to the environment. The department cited effects to air quality, noise pollution and tribal resources, among others.

"There are simply too many unavoidable and negative environmental effects for the project to move forward," Ecology Director Maia Bellon said in a statement.

Millennium Bulk Terminals has long hoped to build a facility along the Columbia River to handle up to 44 million tons of coal a year. Trains would carry the coal from Montana, Wyoming and

other states, which would be loaded onto ships headed to Asia.

William Chapman, the president and CEO of Millennium, said the company will appeal the decision and expects "a fairer and more consistent interpretation of the law."

"Multiple recent decisions by the agency seem biased against the Longview

community, and particularly blind to the need for employment opportunities in Cowlitz County," he said in a written statement.

Environmentalists, tribes and others have fiercely opposed the project — which could increase U.S. exports of coal by 40 percent — because of concerns about global warming, coal dust pollution and potential damage to

fisheries on the river. Several of those groups lauded Tuesday's decision.

"The state did the right thing today, standing up for clean water, public health and the Pacific Northwest's iconic endangered salmon runs," Power Past Coal co-director Jasmine Zimmer-Stucky said in a statement.

Businesses, some labor groups and other supporters

say the project would create jobs, add tax revenue and boost the local economy. The governor of Wyoming, the nation's leading coal-producing state, previously traveled to pitch the importance of coal exports to the governors of Washington and Oregon.

Kris Johnson, president of the Association of Washington Business, criticized the process that led to the decision, saying that the project has faced "unprecedented regulatory hurdles."

"We need companies to invest in manufacturing, construction and infrastructure to support trade," he wrote in a prepared statement. "Instead of turning away investment, our leaders should be encouraging responsible growth."

Montana's attorney general said he plans to review the decision to make sure the law has been followed.

An environmental review released in April by Washington's ecology department and Cowlitz County analyzed potential harm to fish habitat, wetlands, water quality, local communities and more. Of

23 environmental areas, 19 would face harmful effects, and some could not be offset or reduced, officials said at the time.

The review found that coal dust pollution from trains would not be major because emissions levels would be below state and federal standards, but pollution from locomotives would raise the cancer risk for one low-income neighborhood.

Residents also would see more noise and traffic delays at rail crossings without a quiet zone or other measures, the study said. At full capacity, the project would add 16 more trains through the area and increase the number of ships by 1,680 a year.

Gov. Jay Inslee said he was confident that state ecology officials "based their decision on sound science and in accordance with the law."

"It's absolutely critical that all projects — particularly of this scale — undergo an objective and extensive review that ensures they are able to meet the standards necessary for protecting our land, air and water," he said in an emailed statement.

HERMISTON

Consultant offers advice on conference center rates, operation

By JADE MCDOWELL
East Oregonian

A consultant hired to analyze the market position of the Hermiston Conference Center has recommended that the city modify its rates to give the same price to nonprofit, public and private events at the center.

The recommendation was one of several in a report by J Robertson and Company presented to the city council Monday. The city paid about \$10,000 for the analysis in anticipation of its plans to take over management of the Hermiston Conference Center in January.

Sara Singer told the council that the transition provides "an opportunity to make some improvements and put some new policies in place." The report recommended that the city review

policies for the conference center and update them where needed, including a single set of rates and policies for all users. J Robertson and Company gathered rate comparisons for Hermiston venues including the conference center, Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center, Armory, Oxford Suites and Maxwell Event Center, as well as the Port of Morrow in Boardman and Pendleton Convention Center.

The report recommends that the information be used to "establish rates that are competitive with market rates, maximize service cost recovery, and are consistent with the community's philosophy on providing cultural and recreational services to the community."

Councilor Jackie Myers she wouldn't want the city to create a rate structure that

discourages groups from booking the center, but it would also be hard to have to make a separate decision on every single event. Mark Morgan, assistant city manager, said a single rate would likely mean a cheaper price for private events than in the past but a more expensive rate than nonprofits have been paying.

Parks and recreation director Larry Fetter said the department has always determined pricing by whether the user is a Hermiston resident or non-resident.

The report also recommended using the parks and recreation department's online booking system to schedule events at the conference center and move all booking and information about the center onto a page on the city's website. To maximize use of the building,

it recommended evaluating the cost of room dividers for the large central room that would allow multiple events to take place at the same time.

City Manager Byron Smith said the city had not yet looked into dividers but it was something he felt the city should explore.

The report's other three recommendations for the Hermiston Conference Center were to use the center's storage space for recreation equipment, have a city staff member or "trained building monitor" on site during all events, and research the cost of providing janitorial and maintenance in-house instead of through a contract.

In recognition of the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center's effects on the conference center, the report also offered three recommen-

dations for EOTEC: consider providing maintenance and janitorial services in-house, create a marketing plan and add more signs directing visitors to the facility. The city and Umatilla County share ownership and operational responsibility for the Eastern Oregon Trade and Event Center.

The report also listed the priorities for events at both centers based on feedback from staff. For the Hermiston Conference Center, priorities were listed as parks and

recreation events, chamber of commerce events, private rentals and public events. For EOTEC, priorities are trade shows, regional events, the Umatilla County Fair, outdoor events and events with more than 300 people.

The city council adopted the report during its regular meeting Monday but is not bound by any of the recommendations.

Contact Jade McDowell at jmcdowell@eastoregonian.com or 541-564-4536.

Corrections

An article in Tuesday's *East Oregonian* provided incorrect dates of death for Vietnam War soldiers Greg Gessel and Gordon Spearman, of Hermiston. Gessel was killed on Sept. 14, 1967, and Spearman on March 10, 1971.

The *East Oregonian* works hard to be accurate and sincerely regrets any errors. If you notice a mistake in the paper, please call 541-966-0818.

EAST OREGONIAN

— Founded Oct. 16, 1875 —

211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton 541-276-2211
333 E. Main St., Hermiston 541-567-6211
Office hours: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Closed major holidays

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East Oregonian (USPS 164-980) is published daily except Sunday, Monday and Dec. 25, by the EO Media Group, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Periodicals postage paid at Pendleton, OR. Postmaster: send address changes to East Oregonian, 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton, OR 97801. Copyright © 2017, EO Media Group

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AccuWeather.com Forecast

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Pleasant with plenty of sunshine	Sunny and beautiful	Some sun; rain at night	Cooler; a shower in the p.m.	Mostly cloudy, breezy and cool
78° 49°	81° 51°	78° 53°	65° 48°	63° 44°
HERMISTON TEMPERATURE FORECAST				
81° 47°	83° 48°	80° 55°	70° 51°	68° 47°

ALMANAC

PENDLETON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	76°	52°
Normals	73°	46°
Records	94° (1899)	24° (1908)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. Trace
Month to date 0.91"
Normal month to date 0.46"
Year to date 12.28"
Last year to date 8.02"
Normal year to date 8.84"

HERMISTON
through 3 p.m. yesterday

TEMPERATURE	HIGH	LOW
Yesterday	77°	52°
Normals	75°	44°
Records	98° (1952)	32° (2000)

PRECIPITATION
24 hours ending 3 p.m. 0.00"
Month to date 0.36"
Normal month to date 0.37"
Year to date 7.01"
Last year to date 5.44"
Normal year to date 6.49"

SUN AND MOON

	First	Full	Last	New
	Sep 27	Oct 5	Oct 12	Oct 19

REGIONAL FORECAST

Coastal Oregon: Mostly sunny today. Warmer in central parts; pleasant in the south.

Eastern and Central Oregon: Pleasant today with plenty of sunshine. Clear tonight.

Western Washington: Mostly sunny today. Clear tonight. Brilliant sunshine tomorrow.

Eastern Washington: Sunny today. Clear tonight. Plenty of sunshine tomorrow.

Cascades: Mostly sunny and pleasant today. Mainly clear tonight. Sunny and nice tomorrow.

Northern California: Plenty of sun today; pleasant at the coast. Mainly clear tonight.

REGIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Astoria	82	55	s	73	54	s
Baker City	76	35	s	77	39	s
Bend	76	43	s	79	46	s
Brookings	74	54	s	68	54	pc
Burns	72	32	s	74	33	s
Enterprise	73	41	s	76	42	s
Eugene	83	49	s	84	52	s
Heppner	75	49	s	78	50	s
Hermiston	81	47	s	83	48	s
John Day	76	49	s	78	49	s
Klamath Falls	77	39	s	78	41	s
La Grande	75	42	s	78	44	s
Meacham	74	41	s	77	43	s
Medford	88	51	s	88	53	s
Newport	76	53	s	68	54	s
North Bend	78	53	s	68	55	s
Ontario	76	44	s	77	43	s
Pasco	81	45	s	82	47	s
Pendleton	78	49	s	81	51	s
Portland	82	59	s	85	58	s
Redmond	77	37	s	81	41	s
Salem	85	53	s	85	55	s
Spokane	73	49	s	77	50	s
Ukiah	74	40	s	78	41	s
Vancouver	82	57	s	83	57	s
Walla Walla	79	55	s	83	58	s
Yakima	80	47	s	82	49	s

WORLD CITIES

	Today			Thu.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Beijing	74	48	pc	73	47	s
Hong Kong	95	84	s	94	82	s
Jerusalem	78	61	s	77	61	s
London	69	56	pc	66	54	pc
Mexico City	73	58	pc	70	58	t
Moscow	52	37	c	51	39	pc
Paris	70	57	pc	73	58	pc
Rome	76	56	s	76	56	pc
Seoul	80	59	r	74	50	s
Sydney	74	64	pc	78	57	pc
Tokyo	79	70	pc	79	65	r

WINDS

(in mph)	Today	Thursday
Boardman	NE 4-8	NE 4-8
Pendleton	NNE 4-8	NW 4-8

UV INDEX TODAY

1 2 4 4 2 1

8 a.m. 10 a.m. Noon 2 p.m. 4 p.m. 6 p.m.

0-2, Low 3-5, Moderate 6-7, High; 8-10, Very High; 11+, Extreme

The higher the AccuWeather.com UV Index™ number, the greater the need for eye and skin protection.

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NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.

National Summary: Maria will brush eastern North Carolina with squalls and rough seas today. Storms will dot the Midwest as the risk of flooding continues over the southern Plains and Rockies. Most other areas will be dry.

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)
High 97° in Harlingen, Texas Low 14° in Bodie State Park, Calif.

NATIONAL CITIES

	Today			Thur.		
	Hi	Lo	W	Hi	Lo	W
Albuquerque	63	53	t	65	53	r
Atlanta	89	69	s	89	68	s
Atlantic City	79	70	c	79	55	pc
Baltimore	86	66	pc	77	52	s
Billings	69	44	pc	70	46	pc
Birmingham	90	68	s	86	63	s
Boise	73	49	s	76	50	s
Boston	81	64	pc	75	51	pc
Charleston, SC	91	71	pc	92	71	pc
Chicago, IL	73	51	s	73	54	s
Cleveland	85	58	pc	70	51	pc
Dallas	86	69	t	81	65	c
Denver	59	46	c	59	43	r
Detroit	79	51	pc	69	52	s
El Paso	76	62	t	79	61	pc
Fairbanks	54	38	pc	43	34	r
Fargo	67	45	s	69	40	pc
Honolulu	89	76	pc	89	76	pc
Houston	90	73	pc	89	72	pc
Indianapolis	80	53	pc	74	52	s
Jacksonville	92	70	pc	94	71	s
Kansas City	70	50	pc	74	54	s
Las Vegas	86	66	s	87	67	s
Little Rock	87	66	pc	81	60	pc
Los Angeles	90	63	s	90	64	s
Louisville	87	58	s	76	54	s
Memphis	88	68	s	81	61	s
Miami	89	77	sh	90	76	c
Millwaukee	70	51	s	72	54	s
Minneapolis	65	51	s	71	49	pc
Nashville	89	65	s	79	55	s
New Orleans	80	65	s	92	75	s
New York City	84	68	pc	78	56	pc
Philadelphia	82	68	pc	78	55	pc
Phoenix	92	69	s	95	74	s
Portland, ME	79	63	pc	74	45	pc
Providence	82	65	pc	80	50	pc
Raleigh	88	67	s	88	58	pc
Rapid City	67	42	s	70	45	s
Reno	75	45	s	79	48	s
Sacramento	91	56	s	91	57	s
St. Louis	77	55	pc	76	56	pc